

BY W. P. WILLIS.

RURAL LETTERS AND OTHER RECORDS OF THOUGHT
AT LEBANON, written in the intervals of most hard
Literary Labor, by N. PARKER WILSON.
New York: Baker & Scribner.

Everything in this volume, we believe, has already come before the eyes of the public, though in different forms and at different times. This, however, only renders the collection more welcome and acceptable. There is scarcely a page in it which the reader will not remember and turn to again with a fresh sense of delight. It bears the imprint of Nature in her purest and most joyous forms and under her most cheering and inspiring influences. There is no melodramatic mingling of light and darkness. The dew-drops are real dew; the leaves have their natural tint and softness, and loss with as careless a grace on the pages as in the woods of Glenmary; the winds and sunshine keep their buoyancy and brightness; and we see the landscape as in a mirror, only that it is softened and penetrated by the presence of human thought and human affection. The unity of inspiration from which the different portions of the book were written, links them equally to the reader's sympathy, and gives him a delightful interest in following the same mind, always varied yet always cheerful and inspiring in its expression, through other scenes and experiences. We would ask no pleasure companion than this volume of Willis (saying his real presence) for a summer's ramble into the fields or among the hills.

The title we have already quoted gives note of the separate writings which compose the book. In point of paper, typography and binding, it is fittingly neat and elegant. Willis's dedicatory preface to his little daughter, which we here copy, will tell our readers more of his purpose and desire, in its publication. Standing at the entrance of the volume, first seen and first read, this dedication reminds us of an inscription which we once saw upon the door of a cottage in the Black Forest: "God bless this house, and all who cross its threshold."—*New York Tribune.*

TO IMMOGEN.

MY SWEET DAUGHTER: The Letters in this volume which describe your birth-place—mere pulse-countings as they are, in the way of literary records—should be dedicated to you, if printed at all; and I had therefore written your name after the title page just ready for the press. A joyous laugh from you, at play with your doll in an adjoining room, reached my ear a moment since, however, and suggested to me the time that must elapse before you could read so uneventful a book understandingly, and the necessity there would be, even then, that the circumstances under which it was written should be somewhat explained to you. I felt—as a man fond of his grounds might do, who should see his favorite tree judged of by a single view at noon—a wish that it might be seen, also, with the shadows falling earlier and later. The interest with which these simple letters from Glenmary may be read by you, must depend much upon your knowing over what ground, in my own mind, this brief passage of my life there its influences. If I had any of that instinctive feeling, which we sometimes vaguely trust, that I should be here, when you are grown to womanhood, to say to you what I have taken my pen to write I should still let the dedication of this least labored yet favorite volume, to my beloved child, stand simply with her name.

At the time of your birth, I had lived four years at Glenmary; and when—pacing the walk in front of my cottage, beneath the stars of a night of June—I heard your first faint cry, I recognized, in my fearful thanks to God, that a drop was overflowing added, to a cup of happiness already swelling to the brim. For enjoyment of the rural life I found so delightful, I had, it is true, made somewhat the preparation with which one sleeps in a house that the haunting of some nameless spirit has made untenable by others—searching first, with the candle of experience, every apartment beside the one I intended to occupy. I had tried life in every shape which, if left untold, might fret imagination. I had studied human nature under all the changes which can be wrought by differences of climate, rank, culture and association. My demands, for happiness, had closed in and concentrated upon my own heart the father I went and the more changes I tried. I came to Glenmary, absolute in my conviction that I brought with me, or could receive there, from God, all the material requisite for my best enjoyment of existence. In my five years' trial of this upshot of experiments in happiness, every hour wedded my love to it more strongly. Even the anxiety which the loss of our small competency clouded the first year that the sweet thread of your life was braided through—even that harsh trouble, and the disasters and broken reliance which followed close upon its heels, and finally drove me back to the life I had rejected, failed to touch, while I could cling to the hope of remaining there, the essential elements of my endearment to that calm paradise. Misfortune, that changes the looks of men, my dear Imogen, leaves the stars looking as kindly down, and the trees and flowers wandering the eye as unalteredly.

You may understand, from this, how, in the life pictured in these letters, lay a framework of nature for yourself, the much pondered promises of which were the ties hardest to sunder. In my observation of your sex, I had so learned the value of character formed under the influences of refined rural life, and taking its thought pressure and guidance, meantime, from those minds, only over which God has breathed the awe of paternal responsibility. The impressive and flexible nature of woman so requires, for the preservation of its individuality, an isolation from the mixed influences and assimilating overbearings of a city. A dew-drop, given to the exhaling sun with its rounded pearl-shape unswayed but by breath from Heaven, and another, shaken from its leaf-shelter, and lung into a stream to flow on and waste, undistinguishable from turbid waters, are not more different in purity and beauty, than the same character may be made by these differences of nature. Glenmary, after your birth, seemed to me to have been foreseen by my good angel, as the cradle and nursery I should want for you. With images of my fair child, tossing her sunny locks in unshowered grace to the wind, I had peopled all the wild wood-walks above the brook; the lawns and fields along the river were play-grounds and rambling

places for a blue-eyed and infantile type of an angel mother; the trees seemed spreading their shadows in conscious preparation; the shrubs were planted to keep pace with her growth; and my own onward life—so cheered and beguiled, so graced and supplied with sweetest company and occupation—was forecast in a far-welcomed future. Do you not see how, without knowledge of these dream-peoplings, you could scarce read my portrayings, of that relinquished life, with a full understanding of my value of it?

This five years' oasis of country existence, grave shape and force to another sentiment that has always struggled within me, and, (fancy-pricing of my saleable commodities though seem,) I will venture to mention it—*for, in imagining you as reading this volume, by-and-by, it is a view of myself that I like to trace in my expression.* I scarce know how to express it, however; for, sure as I am of conveying the feeling of every man who has ever paced his free thoughts into "goods and groceries," it is difficult to phrase without misconveyance of meaning. If you have ever seen a field of broom-corn—the most careless branching and free-awaying of all the products of a summer—between sweeping the pure air with the wind's handlings, and weeping what it more usefully may, when tied up for handling as brooms, you can understand the difference I feel, between using my thoughts at my pleasure, as in country life, and in using them for subsistence as in my present profession. How much, and what quality, of the author I might have been from choice, the tone of these Letters, I mean to say, very nearly expresses. I do not intend any comparative disparagement of what I have written upon compulsion. The hot needle through the eye of the goldfinch betters his singing, they say. Only separate, it with this hint you can, what I have done as mental toil, from what I might have written had I been a thought-free farmer, with books, country leisure, and liberty to pick, with the perspective bettering of second thought, from the brain's many-mooded vagaries.

A man may be excused for wishing not to be misrepresented to his child, and I have thus tried to make certain that my own writings, at least, shall speak truly of me to my daughter. The perversions and misrepresentations which follow and bark at one's progress, as curs chase a rail-train through a village street, I have no need to guard against, for they will be outrun and silenced if I am gone from you when you read this—harmless, of course, if I am here. And now, my little unconscious target, this arrow of twelve years' flight must be sped from the string; and, with a kiss, presently, of which you will be far from knowing the meaning or the devotion, I will imprint a prayer upon your forehead—that the shaft may find the heart it is aimed at, as well watched over and as best as wont, broken the bow that sent it be still bent or whether.

Affectionately,

N. P. WILLIS.

MARCH, 1849.

(From the Springfield, Mass., Republican and Gazette.)
MR. WARREN AND MR. BEACH.
The ferocious attack which, both at Washington and here, has been made upon Mr. Warren, the Second Assistant Postmaster General, seems to have been fomented by E. D. Beach, Esq., late a Locofoco Master in Chancery in this town. This functionary was one of a batch of officers created by Governor Morton during his memorable short reign. He was, with the rest, legislated out of office in 1848, when the abuses practised made them no longer bearable by the people. While Mr. Beach held this office, Mr. Warren came before him and was finished. All the records and papers connected with it have been retained in his hands; and what use he is making of them may be seen from the letters which he has been lately writing to the Washington Union, giving partial extracts, and statements of his own; and his publications in the *Hampton Post*—all for the purpose of attempting to destroy Mr. Warren's character and usefulness as a public officer.

The instruments of attack are all drawn from Mr. Beach's secret armory. He puts forth just so much as will answer his purpose of injuring Mr. Warren, and accompanying it with his own insinuations and implications. This, he who was by brief authority, made a Judge, whose whole duty with reference to the case, and the records in his possession, should have been marked, at least, with the appearance of delicacy—we have complained that he has done this—he, with great complacency, writes another note, (and publishes it in the *Post* of the 21st,) graciously offering us the rest of the records on condition that we will publish them! We thank him for no such ill-disguised and pretended liberality. He is not the man, nor his private office the place, to which we desire to go and examine public records, to see what abuses he may have practised. He is no longer a Master in Chancery, nor has he been since the act of 1848; and if he were, he has no right to the possession of those records or papers. His possession of them is unlawful; and it is not for him to dole out to the public such portions as may suit his partisan purposes, and then affect a liberality in offering to let us see them. When we desire to examine public records we choose to go to public archives, and there exercise a free and uncontroled liberty. The laws have given us this right, and but for the unlawful conduct of Mr. Beach we should have had an opportunity to exercise it. The law of 1838, under which he acted, and to which he was bound by his oath to conform, contains, among other things, the following sections:

Sec. 14.—The judge, at the commencement of the proceedings in each case, shall appoint a clerk, who shall be sworn to the faithful discharge of his duty, and the clerk shall keep a record of all the regular meetings of the creditors, and of all the proceedings thereat, and shall preserve all papers filed in the court, and the proceedings, and perform such other duties as may be assigned to him by the court. And the record of the proceedings in each case, and all the papers filed therein, shall be preserved together, and the operation of the proceedings, shall be disposed in the probate office of the county, and be there preserved under the care of the register of probate. And the judge may remove the clerk for any cause that shall seem sufficient, and upon such removal, or upon the death, resignation, or absence of the clerk, may appoint another in his place. And the certificate of discharge, when granted by the judge, shall be recorded at length by the clerk, with the other proceedings, and copies of all parts of the said record, or copies of the register of probate, shall in all cases be admissible as evidence, *prima facie*, of the facts therein stated and contained.

Sec. 17.—Every Master in Chancery in this county, who is appointed in and by authority herein before given to the several judges of probate for the respective counties; and all the provisions of this act contained in reference to the said judges of probate, shall apply to the said Masters in Chancery respectively in like manner as if they had been every Master in Chancery in the county.

Nothing can be plainer, and, accordingly, when Mr. Beach's publication in the *Union* appeared, application was made at the register's office for an opportunity, by several individuals, to examine the records in the Warren case. No such records could be found; and the surprise may be conceived when the register of probate declared that none such had ever been filed in his office!

Mr. Beach now admits them to be in his possession. Years have elapsed since the case was closed; and why have the papers and records been withheld from the public archives? The law required them to be placed there, so that they might be preserved safe from loss, change, diminution, or increase, and open to public inspection. We, as citizens, had a right to see them; that right has been violated; and are we now to be cautiouly told that we may see them by going to a lawyer's private office, or that he will graciously condescend to send them to us. What guaranty should we have that in the loose manner of keeping papers in a lawyer's office, everything remains as it was when the case was closed? A public keeper of archives like the register of probate, has a high public responsibility which affords an ample guaranty. A lawyer's office, and especially a partisan lawyer's office, affords none. At all events, where the law forbids the records from remaining in the latter—where that law is openly disregarded, where is the security?

Mr. Beach is a gentleman whose character forbids the idea that he would intentionally change a record, or abstract a paper; but his character is no fairer or higher than Mr. Warren's. In the changing fortunes of life, Mr. Beach indeed has become rich, and Mr. Warren has become poor. But wealth is not the test of merit, nor poverty of crime. Arrangement and assumption of superiority of rank, indeed, follow the sudden acquisition of riches. But the judgment of the world soon pronounces a just sentence. Mr. Beach has, as we have seen, held an important office. Whether he has in all things conformed to law—whether he has erred, and is open to censure, let the instance here quoted answer. Whether he stands so clear of error as that he does well to come before the world as the accuser of Mr. Warren, let him consider.

Mr. Warren has now commenced his own career as a public officer. Let him be judged by his official conduct. His position is one of high responsibility. Let him be held closely to it. But this concocted beforehand assault upon him, ferocious as it is, will not shake public confidence. His unscrupulous assailants may ransack his history, and from all sources, public and private, draw their viperish poison. They bite a file. Their places of shelter are transparent; people see through and through. They are brittle protections. The recoil of the stones they throw may shiver their glass-houses.

The ravages of cholera in the parish of Ascension, Louisiana, are increasing. The latest accounts state that the planters have lost a large number of slaves. A New Orleans letter dated 18th inst. in the *Times* states that the number of deaths in the former city during the preceding week have been one hundred and ninety-seven, of which seventy-eight were by cholera.—*Bull. Amer.*

BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

IN pursuance of law, I, JAMES K. POLK, President of the United States of America, do hereby declare and make known that public sales will be held at the undersigned land office in the State of WISCONSIN, at the periods hereinafter designated, to wit:

At the land office at FORT ST. CROIX, commencing on Monday, the fourth day of June next, for the disposal of the public lands situated within the undermentioned townships, and parts of townships, viz:

North of the base line, and east of the fourth principal meridian.

Fractional townships twenty-five, and township twenty-six, range eleven.

Fractional townships twenty-five and twenty-six, range twelve.

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